

22 DISEMBER 2017

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NewStraitsTimes • FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2017 •

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SMUGGLING

Teen drug mule's nervousness at KLIA gave him away

Drugs were strapped to thigh, calf

DAWN CHAN
SHAH ALAM
news@nst.com.my

THE nervousness and awkward gait of a 16-year-old school dropout gave him away as he was about to take an international flight to deliver drugs on Dec 13. Drug dealers had promised the

teenager, who was caught with the illicit substances strapped to his thigh and calf, a huge financial reward for his first delivery.

He was arrested with his accomplice, a restaurant assistant aged 39, at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport at 9.40am.

Police found 16 packs of syabu, weighing 4.2kg and valued at RM292,348, strapped to their

legs. The drugs were meant for the East Asian market and could fetch prices six times higher than locally.

Selangor deputy police chief Datuk Ab Rashid Ab Wahab said the duo belonged to a syndicate that had been active for a few months. The syndicate recruited teenagers as its drug mules, he added.

"The mules are provided transport from a hotel to the airport. The hotel is where they would package the drugs and stick them on their bodies. There are several transit homes that the drug mules would stop by before departing," he said yesterday.

"Everything, from accommodation to food and clothing, is provided to the mules."

Rashid added that 12 more syndicate members, including a 14-year-old girl and another 16-year-

old boy, were arrested in an apartment in Cheras and a hotel in Petaling Jaya.

They had records for drug offences and had been remanded until Wednesday.

The arrests led to the seizure of 1.5kg of syabu at a hotel in Petaling Jaya. In another raid, also at a hotel in Petaling Jaya, 2.3kg of syabu and 156g of ketamine were seized. Rashid said the total seizure for both cases amounted to RM273,660.